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JASON EDWARD THOMAS CARDIFF

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10 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
11 CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
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13 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

14 Plaintiff,

15 vs.

16 JASON EDWARD THOMAS
17 CARDIFF,

18 Defendant.

Case No. 5:23-cr-00021-JGB

**DECLARATION OF STEPHEN G.
LARSON IN SUPPORT OF
SECOND MOTION TO
WITHDRAW AS COUNSEL FOR
DEFENDANT JASON CARDIFF**

*[Filed concurrently with Second Motion
to Withdraw and [Proposed] Order]*

Proposed Hearing

Date: July 29, 2024

Time: 2:00 pm

Dept. 1

DECLARATION OF STEPHEN G. LARSON

I, Stephen G. Larson, declare as follows:

1. I am a partner with Larson LLP, and my firm represents Jason Cardiff (“Cardiff”) in this matter. I make this declaration in support of the Motion to Withdraw as counsel for Cardiff filed by myself and Larson LLP attorneys Hilary Potashner, Jonathan Gershon, and Alix Zelener (hereinafter referred to individually and collectively as “Counsel”).

2. On January 31, 2023, an Indictment was filed in the instant matter. (ECF No. 1). The Indictment was unsealed on November 27, 2023. (ECF Nos. 7, 11). On November 28, 2023, Cardiff entered into a written engagement agreement with Larson LLP to represent him in this matter.

3. Beginning in late December 2023, the Government began producing a considerable amount of documents in discovery. To date, the government has produced over 9.2 million documents, consisting of over 21 million pages.

4. On April 8, 2024, Cardiff filed a Motion to Dismiss the Indictment. (ECF No. 45). This motion was a significant undertaking by Counsel. Specifically, it required Counsel to review and analyze thousands of documents produced by the Government, conduct extensive legal research, draft a comprehensive oversized motion and reply brief, and prepare for oral argument.

5. Since the denial of the Motion in June 2024, Counsel has repeatedly advised Cardiff that he is in material breach of the engagement agreement and that Counsel would file a motion seeking leave to withdraw if Cardiff failed to meet his obligations under the contract. Nevertheless, Cardiff has failed to cure his default under the engagement agreement. Accordingly, at this juncture, there has been an irreconcilable breakdown in the attorney-client relationship which makes continuing representation unreasonably difficult.

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1 6. On July 11, 2024, Counsel provided notice in writing to Cardiff of their
2 intent to move to withdraw as counsel. That written notice was followed by
3 multiple conversations between Counsel and Cardiff, reiterating that intent.

4 7. On July 15, 2024, Counsel provided notice in writing to the
5 Government of their intent to move to withdraw as counsel.

6 8. On July 17, 2024, Counsel filed a Notice of Motion and Motion to
7 Withdraw as Counsel, accompanied by an Ex Parte Application to Shorten Time for
8 the Hearing on the Motion. Larson LLP sent a copy of the filing to Cardiff that
9 same day.

10 9. Prior to the filing of the Notice of Motion and Motion to Withdraw as
11 Counsel, Cardiff advised Counsel that he would be preparing his own written
12 opposition to our Motion to Withdraw as Counsel.

13 10. On July 18, 2024, Cardiff reiterated that he was preparing a written
14 opposition. Counsel indicated that Larson LLP would file his submission with the
15 Court upon completion on his behalf.

16 11. To date, Counsel has not received a written opposition from Cardiff.

17 12. On July 24, 2024, the Court denied the Motion to Withdraw.

18 13. On July 24, 2024, after receiving the Court's denial, Counsel again
19 provided notice—both orally and in writing—to Cardiff of its intent to file a motion
20 to withdraw as counsel—this time expressly advising that Counsel intended to file a
21 Second Motion to Withdraw.

22 14. On July 24, 2024, after providing written notice to Cardiff, Counsel
23 again provided notice in writing to the Government of its intent to file a motion to
24 withdraw as counsel—this time expressly indicating that Counsel intended to file a
25 Second Motion to Withdraw as Counsel.

26 15. Cardiff has indicated that he opposes the Court permitting Counsel to
27 withdraw from his representation. He has also indicated that he intends to file a
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1 written opposition to our Motion. Counsel has agreed to file it on his behalf upon
2 receipt.

3 16. Cardiff has indicated that he has not retained alternative counsel.

4 17. The Government has indicated that it takes no position on the Second
5 Motion to Withdraw.

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7 Executed on this 25th day of July, 2024, at Los Angeles, California.

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9 /s/ Stephen G. Larson

10 Stephen G. Larson
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